CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

Sub A1

1. In a relational database management system (RDBMS), a method of processing related records comprising:

receiving a plurality of related records;

inserting said plurality of related records into a single table of an RDBMS;

associating said plurality of related records as a set within said single table using a published function of said RDBMS; and

responsive to a triggering condition, selectively purging particular related records of said set from said single table.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said triggering condition identifies at least one of said plurality of related records and said purging step purges non-identified related records of said set.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said purging step purges each one of said plurality of related records.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said table includes a data type for specifying said plurality of related records and said associating step further comprises assigning to each one of said plurality of related records a common identifier conforming with said data type, wherein said common identifier is unique to said set.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

disassociating selected records from said set responsive to a triggering condition.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

deleting throughout said RDBMS, records linked to said purged records using referential integrity rules.

7. The method of claim 1, said associating step further comprising:

associating selected records of said set as a subset wherein said particular related records of said purging step include at least one selected record of said subset.

8. In a relational database management system (RDBMS), a method of processing related records comprising:

receiving a plurality of related records;

inserting said plurality of related records into a single table of an RDBMS;

associating said plurality of related records as a set within said single table, wherein each one of said plurality of related records is assigned a common identifier unique to said set which conforms to a data type in said table for associating said plurality of related records; and

responsive to a triggering condition identifying at least one of said plurality of related records, selectively purging particular non-identified related records of said set.

9. A relational database management system (RDBMS), comprising:

a table for storing a plurality of records, wherein said table is configured with an identifier for specifying related ones of said plurality of records as a record set, wherein said identifier is unique to each said record set;

an associate record set processor for associating said related ones of said plurality of records with one another as a record set within said table; and

a purge record set processor for purging selected ones of said record set in said table responsive to a triggering condition.

10. The RDBMS of claim 9, further comprising:

a second pre-defined table within said RDBMS for maintaining associations of said related ones of said plurality of records within said table.

11. The RDBMS of claim 9, wherein said identifier is a data type.

12. The RDBMS of claim 9, further comprising:

a disassociate record set processor for disassociating selected records of said record set responsive to a triggering condition.

13. The RDBMS of claim 9, wherein said purge record set function deletes records linked to said purged records throughout said RDBMS.

14. A relational database management system (RDBMS), comprising:

a table for storing a plurality of records wherein particular ones of said plurality of records are related;

an associate record set processor for associating said related ones of said plurality of records with one another as a record set within said table;

a purge record set processor for purging selected ones of said record set in said table responsive to a triggering condition; and

a second pre-defined table within said RDBMS for maintaining associations of said related ones of said plurality of records within said table as said record set.

15. The RDBMS of claim 14, wherein said pre-defined table includes an identifier for specifying related ones of said plurality of records.

16. The RDBMS of claim 15, wherein said identifier is a data type.

17. The RDBMS of claim 14, further comprising:

a disassociate record set processor for disassociating selected records of said

record set responsive to a triggering condition.

18. The RDBMS of claim 14, wherein said purge record set function deletes records linked to said purged records throughout said RDBMS.

19. A machine-readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

receiving a plurality of related records;

inserting said plurality of related records into a single table of a relational database management system (RDBMS);

associating said plurality of related records as a set within said single table using a published function of said RDBMS; and

responsive to a triggering condition, selectively purging particular related records of said set from said single table.

20. The machine-readable storage of claim 19, wherein said triggering condition identifies at least one of said plurality of related records and said purging step purges non-identified related records of said set.

21. The machine-readable storage of claim 19, wherein said purging step purges each one of said plurality of related records.

22. The machine-readable storage of claim 19, wherein said table includes a data type for specifying said plurality of related records and said associating step further comprises assigning to each one of said plurality of related records a common identifier conforming with said data type, wherein said common identifier is unique to said set.

23. The machine-readable storage of claim 19, further comprising:

disassociating selected records from said set responsive to a triggering condition.

24. The machine-readable storage of claim 19, further comprising:

deleting throughout said RDBMS, records linked to said purged records using referential integrity rules.

25. The machine-readable storage of claim 19, said associating step further comprising:

associating selected records of said set as a subset wherein said particular related records of said purging step include at least one selected record of said subset.

26. A machine-readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

receiving a plurality of related records;

inserting said plurality of related records into a single table of a relational database management system (RDBMS);

associating said plurality of related records as a set within said single table, wherein each one of said plurality of related records is assigned a common identifier unique to said set which conforms to a data type in said table for associating said plurality of related records; and

responsive to a triggering condition identifying at least one of said plurality of related records, selectively purging particular non-identified related records of said set.